

LACONIA SUNK; 27 AMERICANS ON BOARD

WEATHER—Rain To-Night; Colder.

"Circulation Books Open to All."

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ARM U. S. SHIPS FOR DEFENSE, WILSON'S DEMAND ON CONGRESS

278 SAVED FROM CUNARDER SUNK ON WAY FROM NEW YORK; 12 ARE UNACCOUNTED FOR

One Death Reported on Liner Sent to Bottom Off Irish Coast—18,099 Ton Ship Biggest Victim of Ruthless U Boat War.

QUEENSTOWN, Feb. 26.—The Cunard Line steamship Laconia, of 18,099 tons gross, which sailed from New York Feb. 18 for Liverpool, has been sunk by a German submarine off the Irish coast.

Another steamer picked up 278 survivors from the Cunarder. They are expected to land here or at Bantry.

The Laconia was sunk at 10 o'clock on Sunday night. It is stated authentically that she was torpedoed without warning.

LONDON, Feb. 26.—Wesley Foss, American Consul at Queenstown, reports that while details of the sinking of the Laconia are lacking, one is known to be dead and some are missing.

The New York office of the Cunard Line announced this afternoon that the Laconia carried 75 passengers, 6 of whom were Americans and that there were 21 Americans in the crew of 216 men. The Americans in the crew were in the fire room and engineering departments, most of them residents of this city.

While the cablegrams from the Cunard Line in Liverpool and London state that so far as is known only one life was lost there is a discrepancy between the total of those on board as given out here—291—and the total rescued. Queenstown reports that 278 survivors of the Laconia have been landed, many of them injured. Allowing for the known loss of one person this leaves 12 unaccounted for.

F. E. Gibbons, Chicago, a representative of the Chicago Tribune.

Mrs. F. E. Harris, wife of Lieut. Col. Harris, of Fort Dupont, Delaware.

Arthur P. Kirby, Bainbridge, New York.

Mrs. Mary E. Hoy, Chicago.

Elizabeth Hoy, her daughter.

Rev. Jos. Warburton, New York City.

There were thirty-three first class passengers and forty-two second class. There were no passengers in the steerage. There were two Swiss passengers and one from Ecuador, South America.

The thirty-three first class passengers were:

Russel D. Bradshaw, Henry G. Boston, Mrs. Boston, Mrs. Charlotte Cheaney, James Lawrie, J. M. Lewis, John H. McCall, John B. Newman, Mrs. L. M. Benson, D. O. Benson, William I. Robinson, Rev. F. Dunstan Sargent, Miss Minnie Siklos, Charles R. Wood, Mrs. F. G. Gibson, J. Guthrie, H. Grant, Miss E. Yvonne, Tom Grant, Master Collin Grant, Sewall H. Gregory, Dr. R. E. Hawks, Henry Chatham, R. J. Downing, Edmund S. Duggan, J. S. Fotheringham, Matthew Alex. French, Mrs. Mary E. Hoy, Elizabeth Hoy, Arthur A. Holland, Cedric P. Ivatt, Lucien J. Jerome and wife.

The Laconia arrived in New York from Liverpool with thirty-three passengers on Feb. 14. An army of stowaways worked night and day to coal and load her and she slipped away from the Cunard dock at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Feb. 17.

Owing to a dispute with some members of the crew the Laconia was anchored in the Upper Bay until the next day while agents of the line signed additional papers. She passed out through the Ambrose Channel on the afternoon of Sunday, Feb. 18, and the twenty-four hours' delay may have meant the loss of the vessel.

In sinking the Laconia the Germans dealt a hard blow to Great Britain, for besides removing from the British mercantile marine a ship of immense

MOTHER OF THAW CALLS HIM INSANE IN COURT PETITION

District Attorney Here to Fight Lunacy Proceedings Brought in Philadelphia.

WILL SEND ALIENISTS. Denial Step Is Aimed to Avoid Extradition—Fails to Convince Swann.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 26.—Lunacy proceedings were begun in Common Pleas Court here today to determine the sanity of Harry K. Thaw.

The petition for a lunacy commission is returnable the first week of April. The application was made by Thaw's mother through her counsel, former Judge Gordon. Mrs. Thaw sets forth that she now believes her son is insane and asks that he be protected by law from his infirmity.

Thaw has been in a hospital here since Jan. 11, when he attempted suicide by cutting his throat. At the time police were searching for him on a warrant issued in New York charging him with beating a boy.

District Attorney Swann was notified this afternoon that James Jay Gordon had instituted proceedings before Judge Ballard, in Philadelphia, to have Harry Thaw declared insane.

The District Attorney was informed that Mr. Gordon had stated the move was not a ruse to defeat extradition. Mr. Swann said that he did not concede this, however. Assistant District Attorney Black will leave for Philadelphia to-morrow morning, and will make application to Judge Ballard to have the District Attorney's office in New York included in the proceedings.

With Mr. Black will go three insanity experts, Messrs S. Gregory of Bellevue, Pierce Dingley and Smith Elliff, to combat the contention of Thaw's insanity.

Earlier in the day District Attorney Swann announced that he and Mr. Black had received information that the sanity proceedings were to be instituted and said everything would be done to have Thaw extradited. Mr. Swann said it was his belief that Thaw was not insane, but abnormal.

"Thaw doesn't want to come to New York," he said. "He knows that there are cases against him, besides the specific one of fogging."

TO ARM AMERICAN LINERS IF CONGRESS SAYS SO

Officials Announce That Sailings Will Be Resumed as Soon as Guns Are Obtained.

If President Wilson is authorized by Congress to arm commerce ships the American line steamships tied up here will resume sailings as soon as guns can be provided, it was stated today by officials of the line.

The St. Louis, St. Paul, Philadelphia, New York and Kronland are at their New York docks. The Finland, of the same line, is on her way from Europe to this port.

All the ships are passenger vessels, but the Kronland is to be turned into a freighter.

THE WORLD TRAVEL BUREAU

Agents, 100 West 42nd St., New York City. Telephone, 4000-4242.

FOUR TOWNS ARE GIVEN UP BY PRINCE RUPPRECHT WITH HARDLY A BLOW IN DEFENSE

Extent of German Withdrawal Is Not Yet Fully Known.

TO STAND ON RIDGE. It Is Expected That the Germans Will Defend a New Line Already Prepared.

LONDON, Feb. 26.—The greatest gain of territory since the battle of the Marne, with its terrible sacrifices of troops, has just been achieved by the British—and with practically no losses. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's men now have Bapaume almost within their grasp. The troops of the Crown Prince Rupprecht have abandoned a section of territory of probably six square miles extent.

According to the Germans from Bapaume, an important strategic point, is now predicted. For two years British troops have pounded unceasingly toward this position. Even winter's snows and frosts have not stilled the methodical bombardment on German positions. But by bit Haig's troops have worn away the German morale and battered the enemy trenches.

One week ago the British drove forward northwest of Le Sars and near Petit Miramont. At that time it was pointed out that the Germans' strategic position after this fresh British advance was such that a retreat was likely. It was not expected that the retreat would be carried out without a desperate effort by the enemy to straighten out the "kink" of Feb. 17.

Dispatches to-day indicated a withdrawal with hardly a blow struck. A few machine gun squads were left, with snipers, to harass the advancing forces, but these were quickly stifled. The full extent of the retreat has not yet been revealed by reconnoitering parties. Preliminary information, however, discloses that British forces are now within four miles of Bapaume.

Butte de Warlencourt, of bloody memory, Serre, Pys, Miramont and Petit Miramont—all are in British hands. All have witnessed some of the most bloody fighting on the western front.

Just how far back Crown Prince Rupprecht has drawn his lines has not been revealed, but hundreds of airplanes are aloft on the Picardy front, endeavoring to locate the new Teutonic defense. Until they report the British themselves will not know the extent of the retirement.

Well informed military men believe Crown Prince Rupprecht, anticipating a great British drive almost at once, has retreated and taken up defensive positions along the Bapaume Ridge, in order to delay the British attack. He knows the British will have to consolidate their new lines and take considerable time to move their big

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Germany Commanders All Coal.

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 26.—A telegram from Berlin says that it is officially announced that the Hindenburg has authorized "Chancellor" von Helldorf to "claim" all coal wherever it is found in the German Empire.

No other details were given, although the whereabouts of the Hindenburg are now in the hands of the German government. The ship is now in the North Sea, and is expected to return to the coast of Germany.

YARROWDALE MEN FREE, OFFICIALLY REPORTED

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—Ambassador Willard at Madrid today called the State Department that the Spanish Office has notified him the seventy-two American Yarrowdale prisoners were released Feb. 15.

No other details were given, although the whereabouts of the prisoners are now in the hands of the Spanish government. The ship is now in the North Sea, and is expected to return to the coast of Germany.

REPUBLICANS TO OPPOSE GIVING POWER TO WILSON

Want to Force President to Call Extra Session—Talk of Filibuster.

DEMOCRATS BACK HIM. Senator Simmons Says That \$500,000,000 Will Be Needed to Carry Out Plans.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—There are indications that a bitter fight will be made on any resolution or bill which may be presented to carry out the request of President Wilson for power to carry out his policies in connection with Germany's submarine warfare.

Several Republican Senators declared they did "not want to man a blank check" for the President and predicted a filibuster for the purpose of forcing an extra session of Congress.

"It is a monstrous proposition," said Senator Thompson of Michigan. "No dictator could ask for more authority. If a resolution granting sweeping authority is presented it will be defeated until March 1."

"I do not believe any resolution which grants the President sweeping authority will be adopted," said Senator Weeks of Massachusetts.

"It is a beautifully expressed request for more power, and a subtle expression of distrust of the Congress," said Senator Jones of Washington. "I do not think we will sign any blank checks."

Opposition even among House Democrats to giving the President blanket authority developed within half an hour of the President's departure.

A Democratic member of the Foreign Affairs Committee admitted he and other members of the committee "oppose hasty action."

Senator Simmons, Chairman of the Finance Committee, said he believed \$500,000,000 would be sufficient at this time to carry out Wilson policy and that it might be provided by an amendment to the revenue bill now before the Senate.

"I think," said Chairman Flood of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "the suggestions made by the President should be enacted to law promptly. There will be opposition to some suggestions he has made, but I have no doubt but that the House will embody substantially all his ideas in a bill and that it will pass the House by a safe majority. The chief purpose of the enactment asked by the President is to protect American shipping, and Republicans as well as Democrats are committed to this policy."

"The President asked Congress," said Senator Lewis, Democratic, "to duplicate the power given to President McKinley to protect the country preceding the Spanish-American war and that which we gave to President Wilson for the protection of our commerce at the time we went to Vera Cruz."

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POTATOES TOO HIGH FOR CITY

F. A. Farrell, director of the Mayor's Purchasing Committee, announced today that \$22 cents a pound is the lowest at the bid opened for the city's supply of potatoes for March. The price for the present monthly supply was \$23 cents a pound. No contract has been closed for March.

Farrell said he was waiting to see if some of the bidders had not come in with a lower bid and was now in the hands of the city's supply of potatoes for March.

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PRESIDENT ASKS POWER TO MEET ANY EMERGENCY IN PROTECTING COMMERCE

"No Recourse," Said the President, "but Armed Neutrality, Which We Shall Know How to Maintain and for Which There Is Abundant American Precedent."

"I Am Not Now Proposing War or Any Steps That Need Lead to It—War Can Come Only by the Wilful Acts and Aggressions of Others."

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—President Wilson to-day appealed to a joint session of Congress for permission to arm American merchantmen, to establish an "armed neutrality," and for full and immediate assurance that he may exercise such authority as he deems necessary to handle the German-American situation.

The President declared he is "the friend of peace and means to preserve it for America" as long as he is able.

"I am not now proposing or contemplating war or any steps that need lead to it," said the President. "I merely request that you will accord me by your own vote and definite bestowal the means and the authority to safeguard in practice the right of a great people who are at peace and who are desirous of exercising none but the rights of peace to follow the pursuits of peace in quietness and good will—rights recognized time out of mind by all the civilized nations of the world. No course of my choosing or of theirs will lead to war. War can come only by the wilful acts and aggressions of others."

"Since it has unhappily proved impossible to safeguard our neutral rights by diplomatic means against the unwarranted infringements they are suffering at the hands of Germany, there may be no recourse but to armed neutrality, which we shall know how to maintain, and for which there is abundant American precedent."

NO OVERT ACT YET, BUT—

The President said that the "overt act" had not occurred, yet it must be admitted that acts of Germany had increased rather than lessened the impression that our ships are in danger.

"I feel," said the President, "that I ought, in view of that fact, to obtain from you full and immediate assurance of the authority which I may need at any moment to exercise. No doubt I already possess that authority without special warrant of law, by the plain implication of my Constitutional duties and powers, but I prefer in the present circumstances not to act upon general implications. I wish to feel that the authority and the power of the Congress are behind me in whatever it may become necessary for me to do."

"No one doubts what it is our duty to do. We must defend our commerce and the lives of our people in the midst of the present trying circumstances with discretion, but with clear and steadfast purpose."

"I request also that you will grant me at the same time, along with the powers I ask, a sufficient credit to enable me to provide adequate means of protection where they are lacking, including adequate insurance against the present war risks."

"We are speaking of no selfish material rights but of rights which our hearts support. I cannot imagine any man

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